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The EXAMINER.

From Monday May 3, to Friday May 7, 1714.

Parcere perſonis, dicere de Vitiis. Martial.

THE Controverſy, which for ſome time hath been carried on by a *Faction* againſt the *Miniſtry*, is at length reſolv'd into the unfathomable Abyſs and inexhauſtible Source of *Lampoon* and *Perſonal Reflection*. Here all along ſuppoſed it would End. Men of unqueſtionable Vertue, whoſe Conduct goes hand in hand with the nobleſt Principles, and who make their own Glory and the Publick Good the Aim of all their Actions; if they and their Country are ſo unhappy to have Enemies, will be moſt liable to be Attack'd this way: For Malice, when Ty'd down and Pinion'd, will Foam and Sputter; and Toothleſs Envy can eaſily find Organs enough to Scold with, and Mumble over the bittereſt Execrations. Beſides; we are not now to be told, that ſuch *Enemies*, ſo Spiteful and Inveterate, to ſuch a *Miniſtry*, ſo ſecure in their own Goodneſs and Reputation, will naturally betake themſelves to Weapons, they think ſo well fitted to their Hands; and which they imagine they can weild with ſo much Agility and Succeſs. Their Spite and Malice will ſupply the Place of better Talents, at leaſt among their own Followers; who are only to be pleas'd with the moſt noiſome Dregs and Deformities of *Satyr*; whereas *Wit* and *Genius* would reſtrain and correct it, and keep it within the Rules of *Art*. The heavieſt Body ſinks deepeſt in Fens and Bogs, the Mire and Canal of Defamation: Where theſe Scavengers care not how much they foul their own Hands, ſo they can empty ſome Part of the Filth upon the next fair Object, that offends them with its Appearance. Such Inſects naturally infeſt the fineſt Fruit; and like *Monkeys*, *Fools*, and *Blacks*, are ſo far in Requeſt, as to be reckon'd among the Retainers and Equipage of a *Man of Quality*. This is the time of the Year, when a certain Sett of officious Birds are employ'd in throwing Dirt up againſt the greateſt and moſt ſplendid *Houſes*, where they Neſtle and Breed: But the good-natur'd *Squire* or *Nobleman*, is ſo far from being offended at ſuch Inmates, or from ordering them to be ſwept away, that, as I am well inform'd, they are in many Families reputed to be Ominous, and very kindly receiv'd as the Fore-runners of Wealth and Proſperity. The Satyrical Compoſures of the *Whigs* ſeem to be of much the ſame Nature, and made up of the like dirty Materials. It is one of their Methods of Propagation: and the *Architects* proceed upon the very ſame Principles of Inſtinct. The moſt Illuſtrious *Houſes* are moſt expoſed to their filthy Incroachments: But however, the Order, Strength and Magnificence of a noble Seat, are not in the leaſt impair'd by theſe uncouth Additions; and there does not ſeem to be any great Neceſſity to removing the Nuſance, ſince in a very little time both the new Model and Builder, with the whole Volatile Species, will vaniſh and be no more; in ſuch a manner, that we ſhall wonder by what ways of Generation, Creatures of the very ſame Shape and Diſpoſition, came abroad again the very next Summer. I treat the *Whigs* with Favour as well as Gentleneſs, when I call their *Perſonal Reflections* by the Name of *Satyr*. It had been a high Compliment to call them only *Lampoons*: But I am willing to let them make the moſt of their *laſt Argument*. As they have the worſt of Men to Defend, and the worſt of Actions to Juſtify, ſo they have the weakeſt and moſt abject Crew of Wretches in Nature to pleaſe and gratify; and therefore they muſt ſink as low as ever they can in their Eſſays and Improvements of *Scandal*, the better to come at the true Taſte of their Followers, and be upon a level with their Underſtanding: For it is this Simpathy and Agreement among all the Parties, the *Writer*, the *Reader*, the *Hero*, and the *Cauſe*, that gives vent to the Staple Commodity, and quickens the Market for Aſperſion and Calumny. I will not ſay, but that there may be here and there a *Genius* among them, well turn'd for maſterly *Wit* and *Raillery*: And they may have a few Writers, who probably would make a Conſcience of keeping ſome feint Reſemblances of Truth in View: But theſe Arts are out of Seaſon; and the Profeſſors of them reſerv'd in profound Silence. The *Bare-Garden* and *Billingſgate* are the *Theatres* they moſt reſort to at preſent: Plain unartful Scandal is more their Talent, and of greater Uſe as Things now ſtand; and will better anſwer the Demands and Capacity both of their *Great* and *Little Vulgar*. For as there are ſome *Rakes*, whoſe Appetites are ſo Debauch'd, that they can Doat upon a homely Creature, if lewd enough for their Purpoſe; whilſt they are inſenſible to true Beauty, ſtrictly Chaſt and Vertuous: So there are *Party-Readers* and *Giticks*, who can hug the groſſeſt Ribaldry, tho' never ſo Senſeleſs and Ill-deſign'd, purely for being Abuſive, and for gratifying their particular Spleen and Malice; when true *Wit* and juſt *Satyr*, tho' never ſo Savoury and Regular, nor ſo well-aim'd againſt a reigning Vice or Prejudice, ſhall be cry'd down and neglected, as Taſtleſs, Flat and Inſipid.

Theſe Reflections occur'd to me, upon a View of the *Writings* of the *Whigs* for this *laſt Month*; an Amuſement, in which, I own with Remorſe, I do ſometimes miſpend an Hour or Two. The Truth is, they always *Fly a Paper* in ſo conſpicuous a manner, that one cannot go abroad, without being over-perſuaded to ſtare at and obſerve it. The entire *Collection* conſiſts of *Lampoons*, *Paſquils*, *Songs*, *Ballads*, *Half Sheets*, and *Three-peny Cuts*, full of ſtale Jeſts, vile Reflections, Self-evident Lyes, horrid Calumnies, lewd Billingſgate, ſenſeleſs Buffoonry, and a mixture of all Evils and Defects, that *Words* can poſſibly be guilty of: All which Stuff, fairly bundled up and laid together, is the *preſent Apology* of the People call'd *Whigs*, and the *full and true Account of their Proceedings*. Moſt of this Black Scrawl and printed Dawbing, is barefac'd Calumny, and a heap of Perſonal Reflections piled upon each other, ſo many *Lines* and *Pages* thick as the Piece conſiſts of. If one of their Writers drops an *Allegory*, another ſoon explains it, for fear of loſing the Secret; and tho' ſome of theſe foul Sheets have the Word *Sermon*, and perhaps the Additional Term *Charity* fairly written on their Frontiſpiece; yet upon going deeper, you ſoon diſcover the *Banter*, and ſee all the ſhameful Nakedneſs of a *Libel* under that venerable Covering. The Deſign of theſe Writings is not to diſcant upon the Actions and real Characters of the beſt and greateſt Men among us; but to Trifle with their *Birth*, *Parentage*, *Education*, *Names*, *Kindred*, *Eſtates*, *Habitations*, *Equipages*, *Looks*, *Geſtures*, *Habits*, *Oeconomy*, *way of Speaking*, and the like minute Circumſtances; which are made an ample Fund for Scandal, as Projectors raiſe vaſt Sums out of *Toys* and *Trifles*. If

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at any time one of these Wretches launches his Pen into Affairs of Moment, and attacks a *Virgin Unspotted Character*, in some material Point, upon the Evidence perhaps of *Prejudice* or *Rumour*; 'tis odds but the Author acts the Part of the Old *Pagan Hangmen*, who first *Deflower'd* and then *Executed*. Our Misfortune is, that these Dregs and Offals of *Scandal* and *Sedition* have found their way from the *Porter's Bench* and *Ballad-Singer's Station* into the best Company, and intrude into the most reputable *Coffee-houses*; where if you enter into a Dispute with the poor *Hawker* about the real Value of her Goods, 'tis Ten to One but she Scolds with you in a much better Style than *Her Author* does with the Government; and gives you a better Account of Things, than the *Pamphlet*, which she holds out for your perusal.

I am not about to present my *Readers* with a *Catalogue* of the *Whigs Monthly Library*, nor to enter into a *Critick* upon each particular *Book* and *Ballad*. I do not owe quite so much Spite to the *Dead*, and *such Dead* are hardly worth my Raising. But where a whole Kennel of Dogs are run mad, I have something to say to the *Huntsman*: The Masters of the *Bear-Garden* ought, I conceive, to use fairer Play; and either to change their *Breed*, or to Tye them up, till they are Cured or under better Discipline. If their *Hawkers* would *Write*, and their *Writers Hawk*, they would soon find by coming abroad in Person, how the Judgment of Mankind stands; and Both might be the better for it. Whatever Measures they please to give into, still I insist, that the *Party* ought to call in their *Moroders*, and Silence these *Scoundrels*; which I shall prove they are oblig'd to do, not because it is their Duty, but for a Reason they will be much fonder of, because it is their Interest.

I shall not presume to put them in mind of a known Truth; That the badness of any Cause is seen in the Defence of it. I believe they care not how *Bad* their Cause appears, when their Business is to engage the *worst Tools* and Instruments they can. *Like to Like*, is a Proverb that holds good, as well *Above-ground* as *Under*. Neither can I imagine they are persuaded, that these Improvements in the *Art* of *Libelling* and *Scanda'*, are comprehended within the *Liberties of the Press*, any more than dispersing Poyson in Paper, and Stabbing in the dark, can be reckon'd among the Priviledges of a *Free born People*. If therefore they should push the *Legislature* upon a Necessity of Lying their *Miquelets* and *Banditti of the Press* under some legal Restraints, they can blame no body but themselves; and must, on that Account, expect to bear the Insults and Reproaches of their own Party: For according to the best Rules of Policy, whenever the Ill Consequences of *Liberty* are more and greater than those of *Power*, the *Latter* will, and ought to interpose, for the Limitation and Coercion of the *Former*; and such a restaint may be justified upon Principles of *common Good* and *Safety*. Nor can these People think they are Injur'd, when their Fellow-Subjects, out of respect to them, readily join to confine them, for their own Sakes, within the reasonable Bounds of *good Sense* and *good Manners*.

Another reason why I would advise the *Whigs* to prevent the Interposition of the Government by their own Authority, is because this *Low Libelling* can never answer the main End, for which it was contrived. The *Great Men* they aim at, cannot be supposed to have leisure to attend to such Trifles; and the common Notices of *Sensation* will direct them to keep out of the way of what is Stinking and Noisome. Such *Dirt* cannot come nearer than their *Coach-Wheels*; and the Vulgar, whatever these *Blockheads* may think of their Capacity and Itch for *News* and *Scandal*, will still retain Understanding enough, even without the Use of the *Pen*, to keep above the Level of such Writers. They will *Try* the *Appeal* made to them; and naturally take the Part of those, who are attack'd in so Foul and Cowardly a manner. They see in what good Company their best Friends are abus'd. *Majesty* it self is not secure: For some of these abominable Fragments do not stick to Reflect even upon the *Sacred Person* of the *Qu*——: And of them in particular, which was handed about *last Week*, so Shock'd me, that I could not forbear asking with an honest Warmth; whether any Body had put a *Padlock* upon the *Pillory* and *Whipping-Post*; or given Orders for shutting up the Road to *Tyburn*?

Besides; these People ought to desist from a Consideration of their own want of *Talent* and *Genius*. They are unqualify'd even for this vile and abject Undertaking: Of which we have a plain Instance in the *Case* of *Ballads*; an Entertainment strangely sunk from that Spirit and Reputation, which they had in the Reign of King *Charles* II. If only the *Crab-Tree* could have Reply'd as he ought, to the unjust Usage of his Name, the whole *Species* of that *Vegetable* must have been lost; and there is not a Slip of that Sort, that had not worn it self out in the Controversy. When the *Whigs* will retrieve this Art, I cannot yet see: And what Advantage the Remains of it can be to their Cause, no Mortal can tell; so long as Mr. *Du*——) observes an exact *Neutrality*, without breaking his *Parole* by the fatal Example of a *Brother-Wit*. I am sure, if they will take the *Cap* upon them, and fall down to the *Buffoon Parts*, they ought at least to *Divert*; and if they fail there, since they must still be upon the *Stage*, they should enter only as *Mutes*, or return to their old Business of *Scene-shifting*.

They may also reflect, that by exposing themselves thus, they engage their Friends in a slavish insupportable Drudgery, for the support of their Character: And by enquiring into *Birth*, *Parentage*, *Education*, and other *Parts* of *Secret History*, they bring I know not how many Dangers upon their own *Heroes* and *Patriots*. The *Examiner* hath been *Libell'd* for Touching upon *Persons*, tho' he never did it but with an Eye to *Facts* and *Occurrences* of a publick Nature, where the Mention of the *Parties concern'd* was Just and Unavoidable. What would become of them, if some Writer of the same Side should take up their own Precedent, and follow them in all their Lengths? Tho' the *Tories* could really not write *Reprizals*; and tho' some of their *Leaders* are safe in *Original Obscurity*, yet many of them, and those the most Considerable, would abundantly suffer, if their Enemies were only to turn *Editors*, and *Reprint* their Old Characters upon them. For nothing is more notorious, than that the Favourites of *One Reign* had been the Jest of *Two*, without any regard to the *Differences* about *Religion* or *Politicks*: And the *Whigs* cannot yet take the Benefit of *Popish* Measures; but if they will have their *Saint*, must make him within the *Century*, when perhaps some part of his *Merit* may not be forgotten.

Unhappy Race of Men! How preposterously do they act? Instead of *Satyr*, which spares the *Person* and only lashes the *Vice*, they let Vice alone, and meddle only with *Persons*, which is *Scandal*. Instead of *Accusing* by naming the *Persons* and *Facts*, they run Riot in *Generals*, which is mere *Trifling* and *Wholesale Calumny*. Thus they *Satyrize* when they should *Accuse*, and *Accuse* when they should *Satyrize*; being perfectly Unskill'd in the last Weapons, that can do them any Service.

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